

## No Blazer by Escapaeronaut

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**Summary:**

How could Steve Harrington end up a cop? Well, first Hopper has to ask.

## No Blazer

July 1985

“You wanted to see me, Chief?” Steve has both hands on the doorframe to Hoppers office, trying to act casual with stiff shoulders and a set jaw.

“Yeah, come on in,” Hopper said, setting down the file he was reading, “get the door.” As far as Hopper knew, Steve hadn’t done anything more illegal than some fighting and some underage alcohol consumption. But Steve was wound up, chewing on his lip and looking at anywhere but the chief. Hopper had heard about some fireworks going off at the junkyard the night before, that could have been Steve.

“So,” Hopper leaned across the desk, finally catching Steve’s eye, “I heard from Joyce Byers, who heard it from Nancy Wheeler, who heard it from you yourself, that you didn’t reply back to any of the colleges that accepted you, not even the community college over in Fort Wayne.”

Steve hunched over, rubbing his hands over his face, “It’s just that I-”

“I’m not here to berate you, Harrington. You don’t want to go to college, for whatever reason, fine. But I know you can’t live with your folks forever and you’re too smart for menial labor. After my time in Vietnam, I can’t in good conscience recommend the military. You’re stuck. I’m offering you an out.” Steve stared at him, clearly not believing him, but he hadn’t run out yet, so Hopper plowed on. “Powell’s wife wants to move back to Chicago in the next year, their daughter is expecting twins. I talked to the city council and they agreed to let me send someone to the police academy in the city, on the conditions that that person was a local and agreed to stay for at least five years.” Steve blinked at him a few more times. “You’re my first choice.”

“Me? I’m not- Billy Hargrove kicked my ass last year, and Jonathan Byers the year before that. I mean, Nancy’s a better shot than I am. And-”

"They'll teach you to shoot and to not get your ass kicked. I need someone who knows this town and the people. I need someone who isn't easy to surprise." Hopper leaned in closer to Steve, "When some shit from the Upside Down comes around again, I'm going to need someone who won't lose their head." He straighten up "Plus, I'm going to have to go back to the Hargrove house someday, and I'd like to have someone with me that their little girl trusts."

Steve cocked his head, "Billy's that bad?"

Hopper sighed, "Billy's bad, his father is worse. He was probably a hard man before Vietnam, but now... Not that it excuses it, but Billy isn't an asshole for no reason, he's been learning from the best. I didn't tell you that."

"Tell me what?"

"Exactly," Hopper leaned all the way back now. "Next round at the academy starts the week after Labor Day, I need to get them the paperwork to them by August fifteenth, so I'll give you two weeks to think about it. Come by and ask me anything, if you want to follow me around one day, see what I do, we can do that. I'd tell you to talk to your parents," Steve made a face, "but I don't think you want to. So talk it over with Nancy and Jonathan, or Joyce, or Mrs. Henderson, whoever, but think about it. I'm serious. I think you would be good at this."

Steve sat back and bit his lip again, looking at the front of Hopper's desk. He looked up, "Really?"

"Yes, really." Steve went back to trying to look through the desk.

"Alright, I'll think about it."

"Good. Now, I have to go see about a bike theft over in Loch Nora. Let me know if you want to ride along later this week," Hopper got up, jolting Steve out of his thoughts.

"Yeah, yeah, I'll think about it," he said as he got up. Hopper clapped a hand to his shoulder, then lead the way out of the station. Steve's father's 733 was parked next to Hopper's Blazer and Steve gave it a

once over. “Hey, would I get to drive that?” Hopper looked at him with a slight frown. “Right, no Blazer, gottcha, thanks Chief.” Hopper got in and took off, while Steve sat in the BMW and thought about what he was doing with his life.

**Author's Note:**

This is my first fic! I think Steve's apathy about college is probably a symptom of a touch of depression.